August 19, 2002

Harbor work keeps channel congested

By ANDREW LERSTEN / H-P South Haven Bureau

SOUTH HAVEN - It continues to be a busy year in South Haven's harbor.

In addition to the normal recreational and commercial boating traffic, work barges have been in the Black River channel all summer for a $1.19 million federal project to repair the harbor's north revetment wall.

And next month, a federal dredging project in the Black River is scheduled to be done, City Manager Kevin Anderson said.

So far, all the barges and boats have been able to squeeze by each other.

"It has been very busy," Anderson said. "But it's one of those things, like road construction or sewer work. You have to do it from time to time. There's not a lot of room, but (the barges) have worked pretty good with the boating community. The boaters know it's just an area that's just going to be pinched down."

The north revetment wall project required the city this year to close its harbor walk along the channel and river to the public.

The project entails demolition and replacement of 1,041 feet of the revetment wall, as well as the concrete walkway and handrails, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers officials said earlier.

"It's a little behind schedule," Anderson said. "It's weather-dependent. It's supposed to be done before winter. It will continue all fall."

The last major renovation of the revetment wall occurred in 1972. Only federal dollars are being used for the work.

The dredging work, also a Army Corps project, will be done sometime in September in the Black River and will take up to two weeks to complete, the city manager said.

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